

American Expats Survey

February 2025 • The Harris Poll Thought Leadership Practice





Methodology

This survey was conducted online within the U.S. by The Harris Poll across three waves:

- Wave 1: August 15–17, 2024, among a nationally representative sample of 2,121 U.S. adults, including 347 Gen Z, 630 Millennials, 506 Gen X, and 638 Boomers.
- Wave 2: November 7–9, 2024, among a nationally representative sample of 2,106 U.S. adults, including 327 Gen Z, 579 Millennials, 612 Gen X, and 588 Boomers.
- Wave 3: February 13–15, 2025, among a nationally representative sample of 2,131 U.S. adults, including 304 Gen Z, 576 Millennials, 665 Gen X, and 586 Boomers.





Top Highlights

- **The land of the not-so financially free:** Over half of Americans (55%) are striving to achieve retirement and financial security, with just a fifth of Americans self-reporting securing this goal (21%).
- **Home sweet unattainable home:** Less than half of Americans in 2024 have achieved home ownership (49%), with even fewer currently working towards this goal (32%). Skepticism towards making home ownership a reality is high, with 68% believing that owning a home is no longer attainable for the majority of citizens.
- **Living the dream...or dreaming of leaving:** While just over half of Americans believe they can live a higher quality of life abroad (52%), better quality of life is a leading reason for Americans who want to stay or move out of the country.
- **Better work opportunities, but with high costs:** 70% of Americans believe the U.S. is the most lucrative country for work however, 68% feel that they are surviving more than thriving. For those who have considered moving abroad, 49% cite lower costs as the primary reason for making the jump and 86% express “seeking a more affordable cost of living” as the most important factor.
- **Oh Canada:** Americans name Canada as the most desirable country to move to, followed by other English-speaking countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia.
- **The more (passports), the merrier:** Roughly half of Americans (49%) express interest in obtaining or already possess dual citizenship. Among those looking for a second passport, freedom of travel (39%), access to benefits (27%), and exposure to another country’s culture (25%) are primary motivating factors.
- **Expat hacks wanted:** Whether it’s connecting to trusted international realtors (81%), searching for accessible healthcare options (78%), or managing visa/citizenship applications (77%), Americans are eager for services that could make moving abroad a smooth and convenient process, with 60% even expressing willingness to pay.

Making it in America

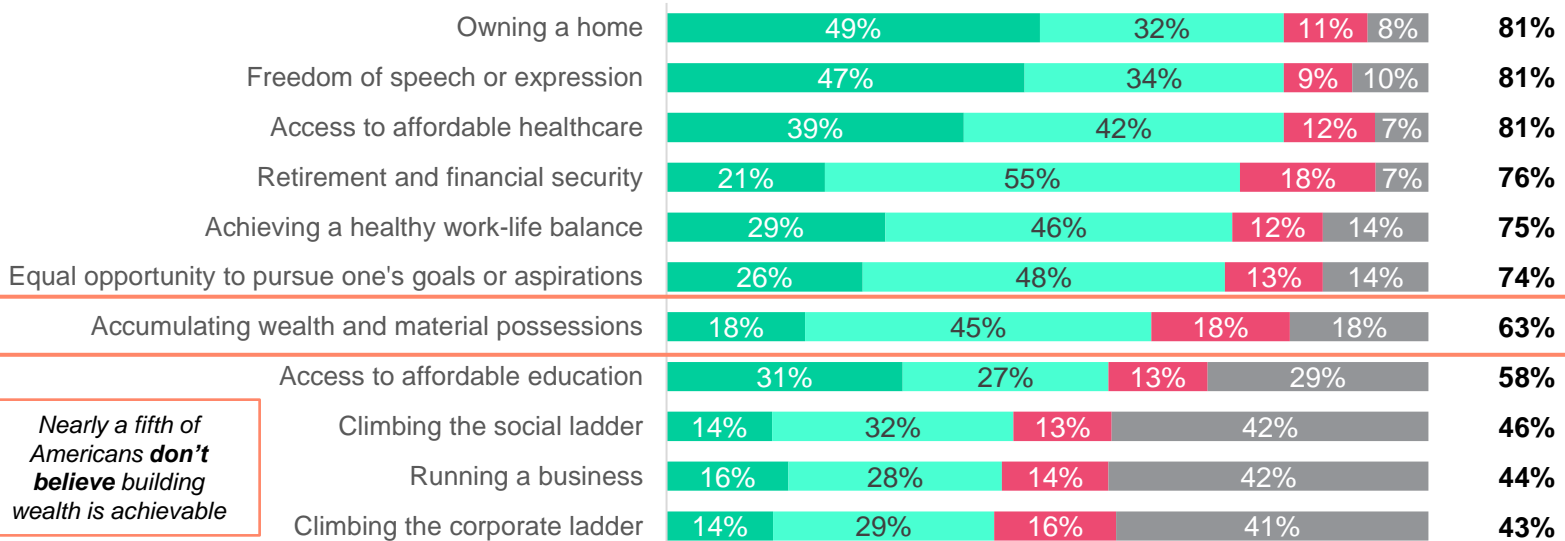
Quality of living, wealth, homeownership, and more



Homeownership, free speech, and affordable healthcare are key areas where Americans have succeeded or continue to strive for success

Which statement best describes your experience with the following factors?

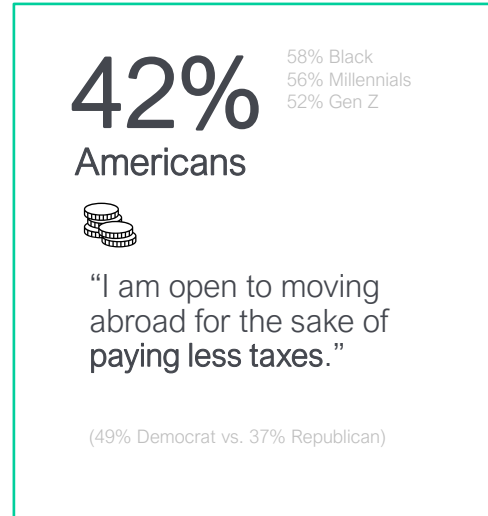
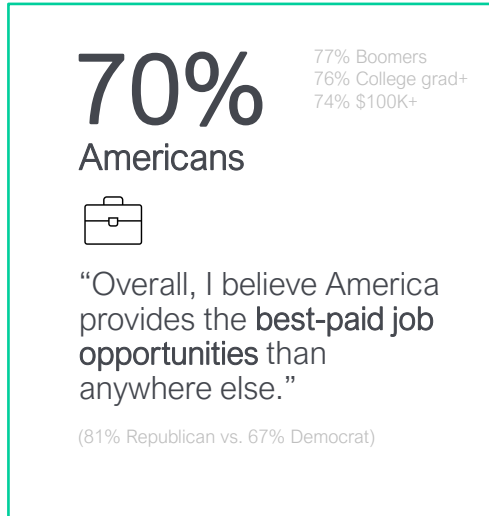
■ I have achieved this ■ I am currently working towards this **Top 2 (Net)**
■ I do not believe this is achievable for me ■ I do not plan to pursue this I have achieved this / I am currently working towards this



Nearly a fifth of Americans **don't believe** building wealth is achievable

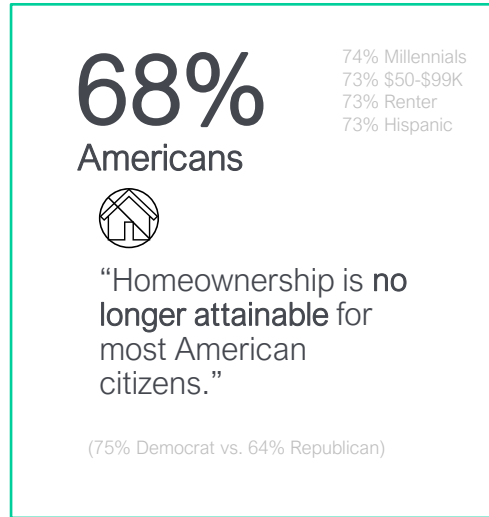
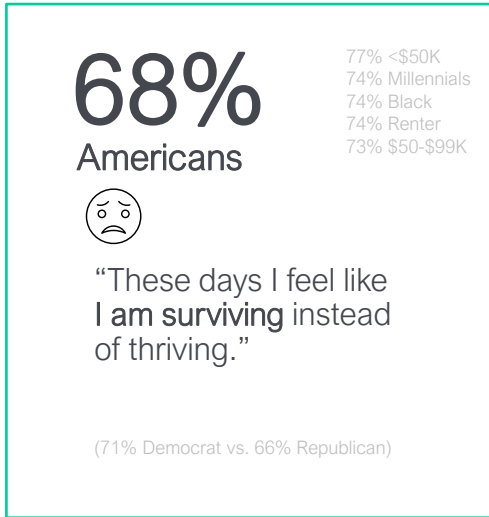


Americans believe there are better work opportunities in the U.S. compared to other places, but consider moving abroad to pay less taxes





Americans increasingly feel stuck in survival mode, with the American Dream slipping further out of reach—especially for Millennials, renters, and lower-income households



Is the Grass Greener on the Outside?

Exploring Americans' desire to move abroad



Roughly four in 10 Americans have considered or plan to move abroad and believe that by doing so, it could lead to greater happiness

How seriously have you considered moving out of the U.S. in the next 2 years?

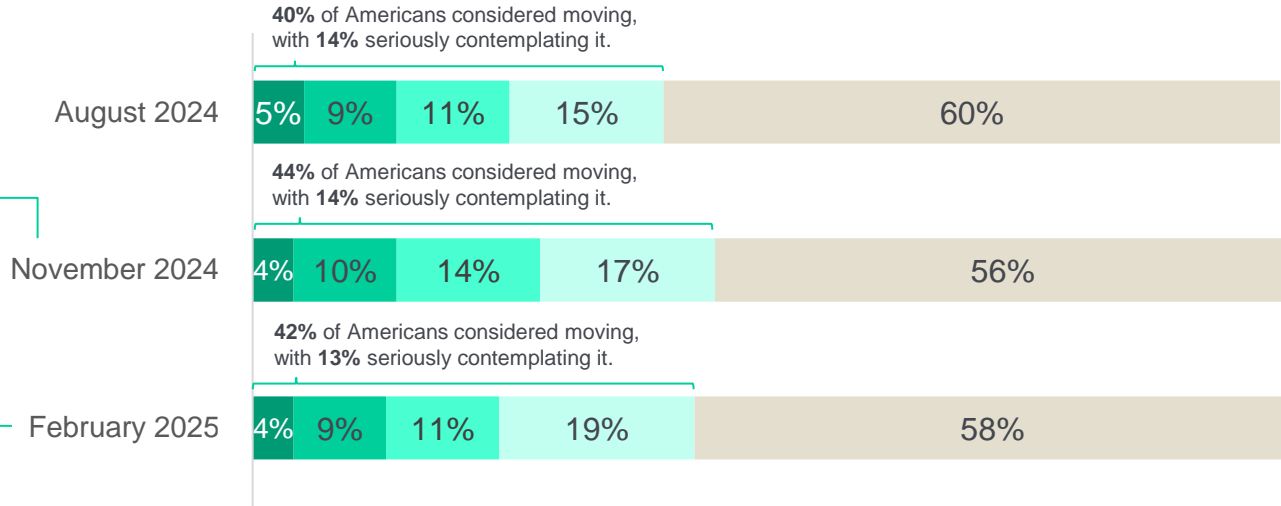
■ Definitely planning to move
 ■ Seriously considered
 ■ Moderately considered
 ■ Slightly considered
 ■ Not at all

The Elections Effect

Right after the presidential elections, consideration for moving abroad increased **+4%** since August.

Most Likely to Move

Groups more likely to consider moving include: Gen Z (63%), LGBTQIA+ (61%), Hispanic (61%), Black (57%), and Democrats (52%).

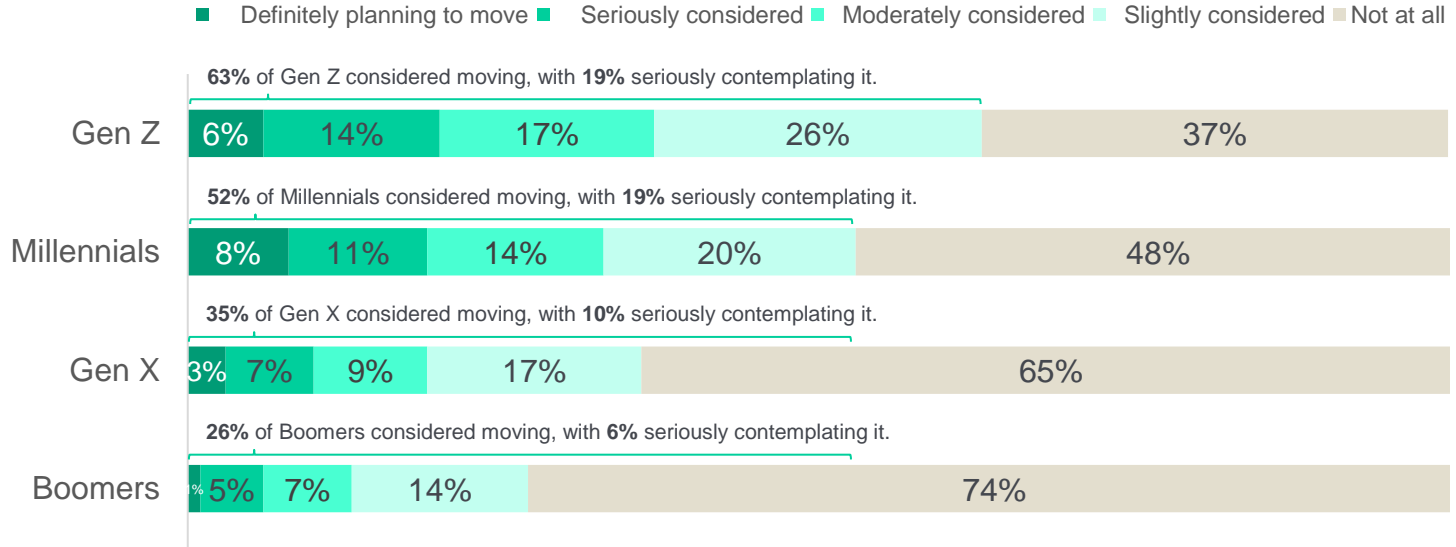




Gen Z and Millennials lead in wanting to move abroad, with nearly one in five seriously considering it

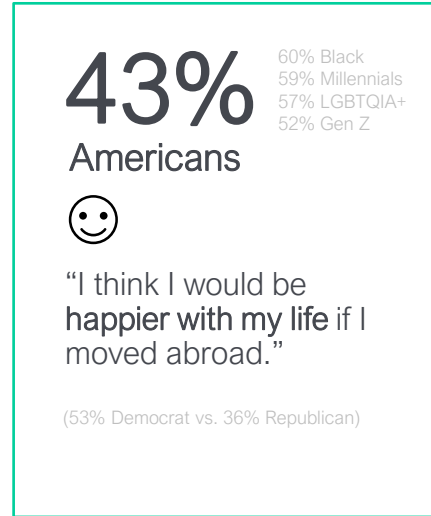
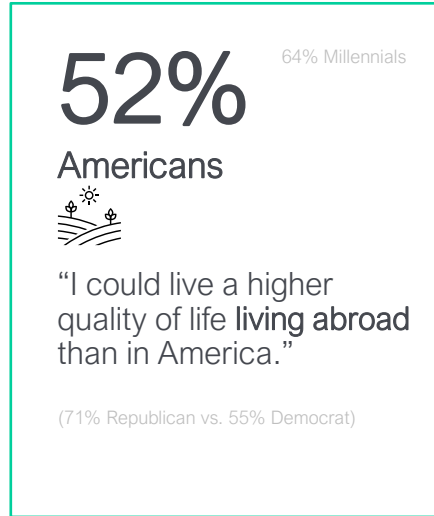
How seriously have you considered moving out of the U.S. in the next 2 years?

February 2025





Young adults and minority groups especially believe that living abroad would improve their quality of life and happiness

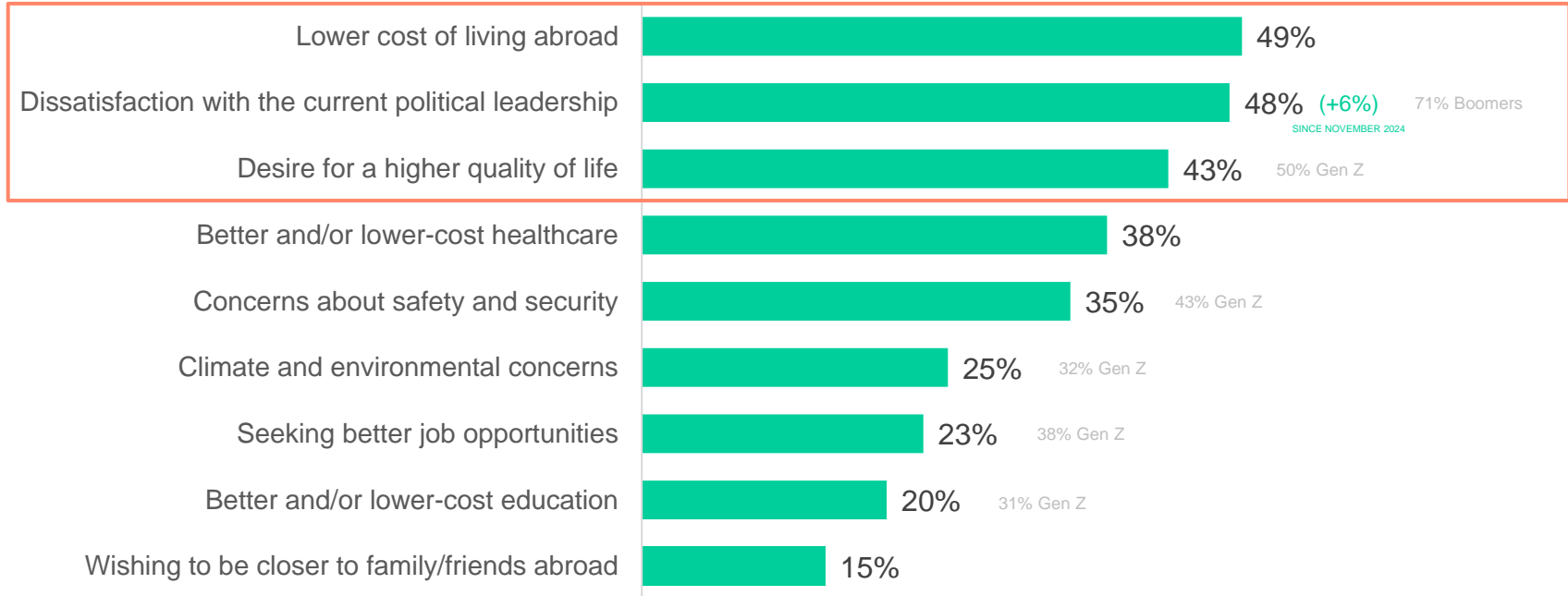




Lower cost of living, political dissatisfaction, and quality of life drive Americans to consider moving abroad

Reasons for considering moving out of the United States

(Select all that apply)



Q: Which of the following reasons best describes why you are considering moving out of the United States? Please select all that apply. (Those considering moving n=887)



Minority groups increasingly fear their rights may be at risk in the U.S., further fueling interest in moving abroad

67%

78% Gen Z
75% Black

LGBTQIA+ Americans



“My rights as an LGBTQIA+ person are becoming more compromised in America.”

(82% Democrat vs. 43% Republican)

58%

77% Black
64% Millennials

Women Americans



“My rights as a woman are becoming more compromised in America.”

(74% Democrat vs. 40% Republican)

57%

65% Black
62% Millennials

BIPOC Americans



“My rights as someone who is part of the BIPOC community are becoming more compromised in America.”

(65% Democrat vs. 52% Republican)



Americans are reconsidering where they can find the American Dream, as they seek affordable living, value alignment, and personal growth

How important are the following factors in your consideration of moving out of the United States?
(Very/somewhat important)

#1	Seeking a more affordable cost of living	86%
#2	Living somewhere that aligns with my values / beliefs	81%
#3	Personal growth / wellness	80%
#4	Escaping political or social instability	78%
#5	Experiencing a new adventure	75%
#6	Immersing into a new culture / way of living	72%
#7	Combating loneliness	58%
#8	Finding love / romantic relationship	52%
#9	Raising / starting a family	52%



Americans name Canada as the most desirable country to move to, followed by the U.K., Australia, France, and Italy

Top 10 Countries:

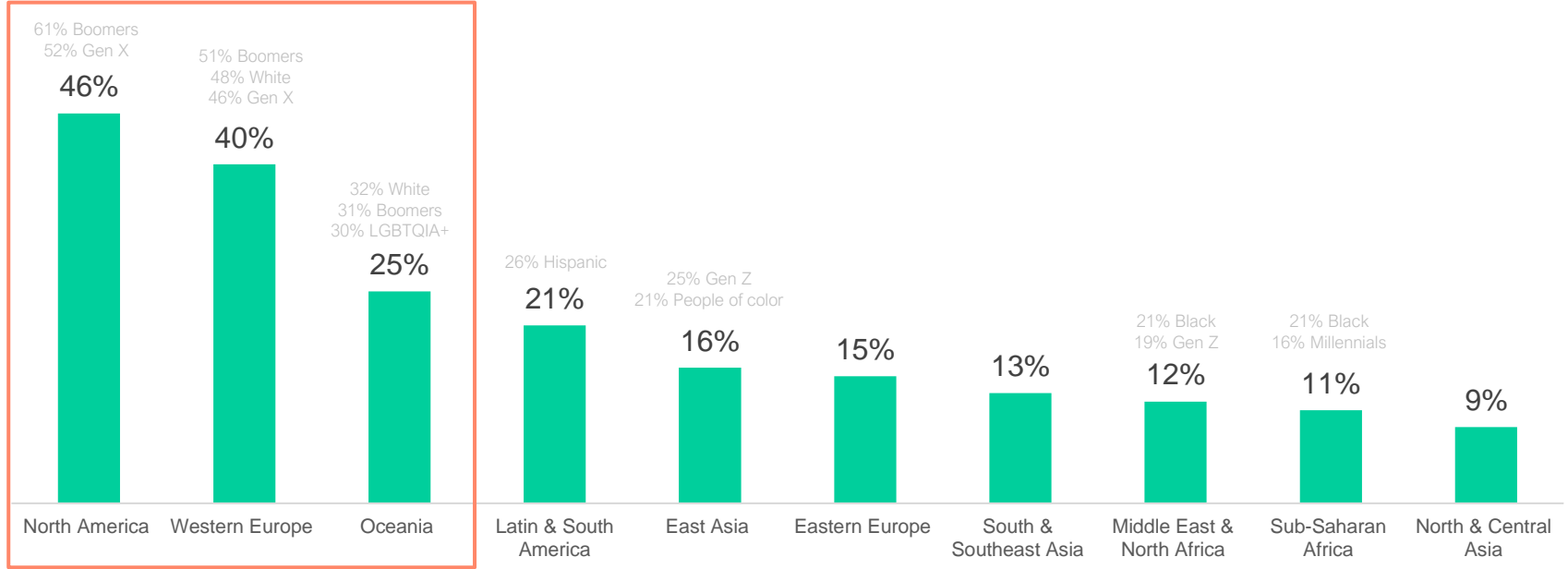
1. Canada
2. United Kingdom
3. Australia
4. France
5. Italy
6. Japan
7. Mexico
8. Spain
9. Germany
10. New Zealand





North America, Western Europe, and Oceania are the most popular regions Americans would consider moving to...

Which of the following regions of the world would you consider moving to the most?
(Select up to three)



Q: Which of the following regions of the world would you consider moving to the most? Please select up to three. (Those considering moving n=926)



...with reduced living expenses being the primary motivator for all three regions

Reasons for moving by top desired regions (Select all that apply)

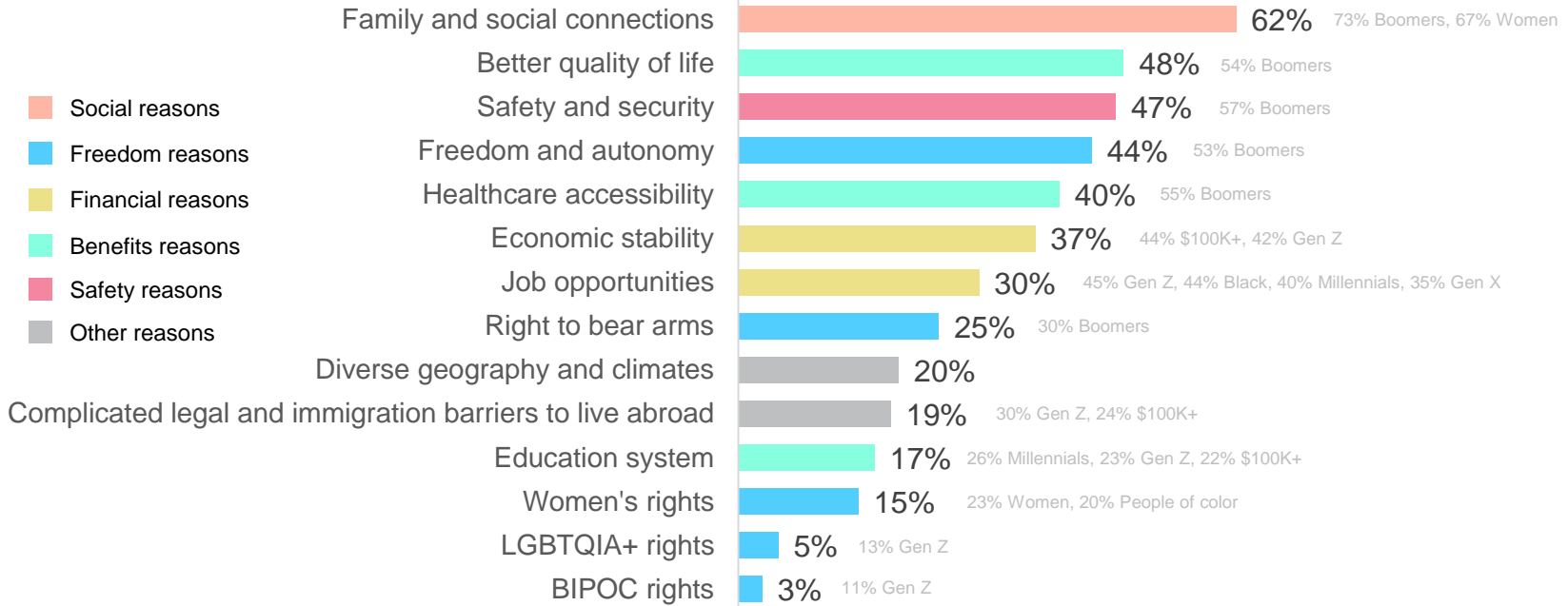
North America <i>(e.g., Canada, Mexico, Caribbean, etc.)</i>	Western Europe <i>(e.g., U.K., Spain, Norway, etc.)</i>	Oceania <i>(e.g., Australia, New Zealand, etc.)</i>
54% Cost-effective living	48% Cost-effective living	45% Cost-effective living
46% Affordable real estate/housing	47% Interest in language/culture	43% Preferred climate/weather
44% Preferred climate/weather	44% Accessible transportation/mobility	42% Interest in language/culture
39% Connect w/ others of similar cultures	42% Connect w/ others of similar cultures	41% Strong public safety/security
38% Easy immigration	42% Preferred climate/weather	35% Affordable real estate/housing
38% Interest in language/culture	38% Sense of community/belonging	35% Sense of community/belonging
38% Sense of community/belonging	38% Strong public safety/security	33% Connect w/ others of similar cultures
37% Racial/ethnic diversity & inclusivity	37% Affordable real estate/housing	29% Accessible transportation/mobility
33% Strong public safety/security	35% Racial/ethnic diversity & inclusivity	28% Racial/ethnic diversity & inclusivity
32% Accessible transportation/mobility	28% Easy immigration	10% Easy immigration



Americans who would not move abroad cite quality of life, family, and safety as top reasons to stay

Reasons for not moving out of the United States

(Select all that apply)



Q: You mentioned you would never move out of the United States. What are your reasons behind this? Please select all that apply. (Those who would never consider moving n=1,180)

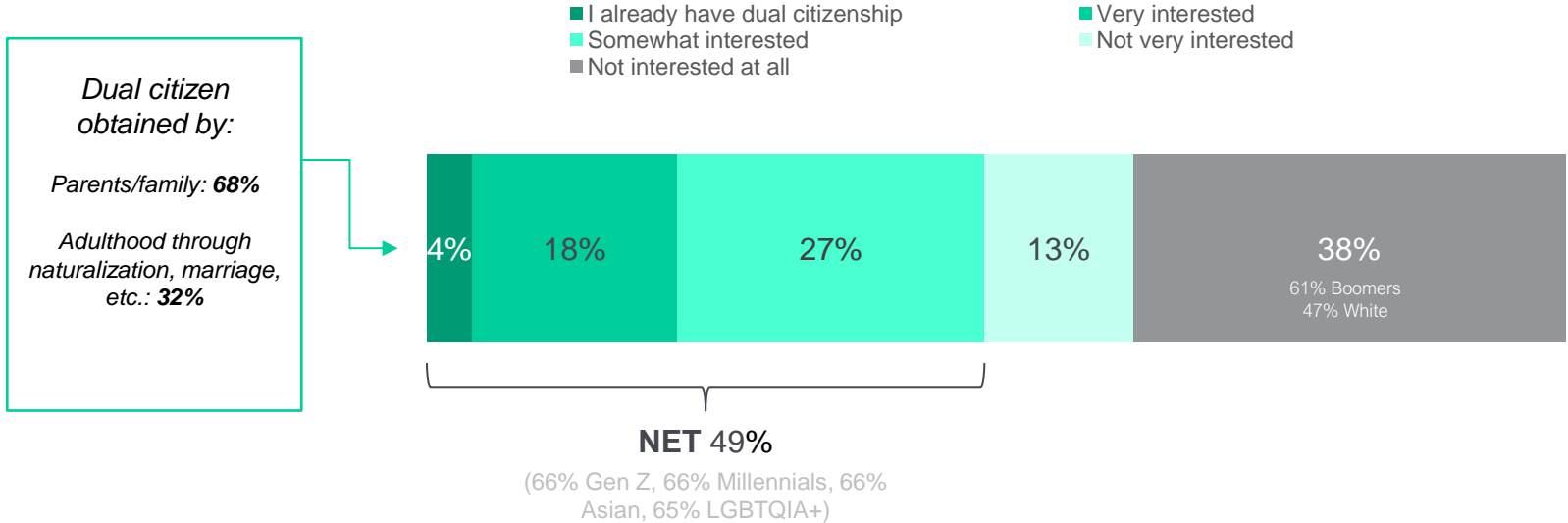
The Expat Enterprise

Americans' evolving interest in dual citizenship



Two-thirds of Gen Z and Millennials are interested or already possess dual citizenship, obtained by family, naturalization, or marriage

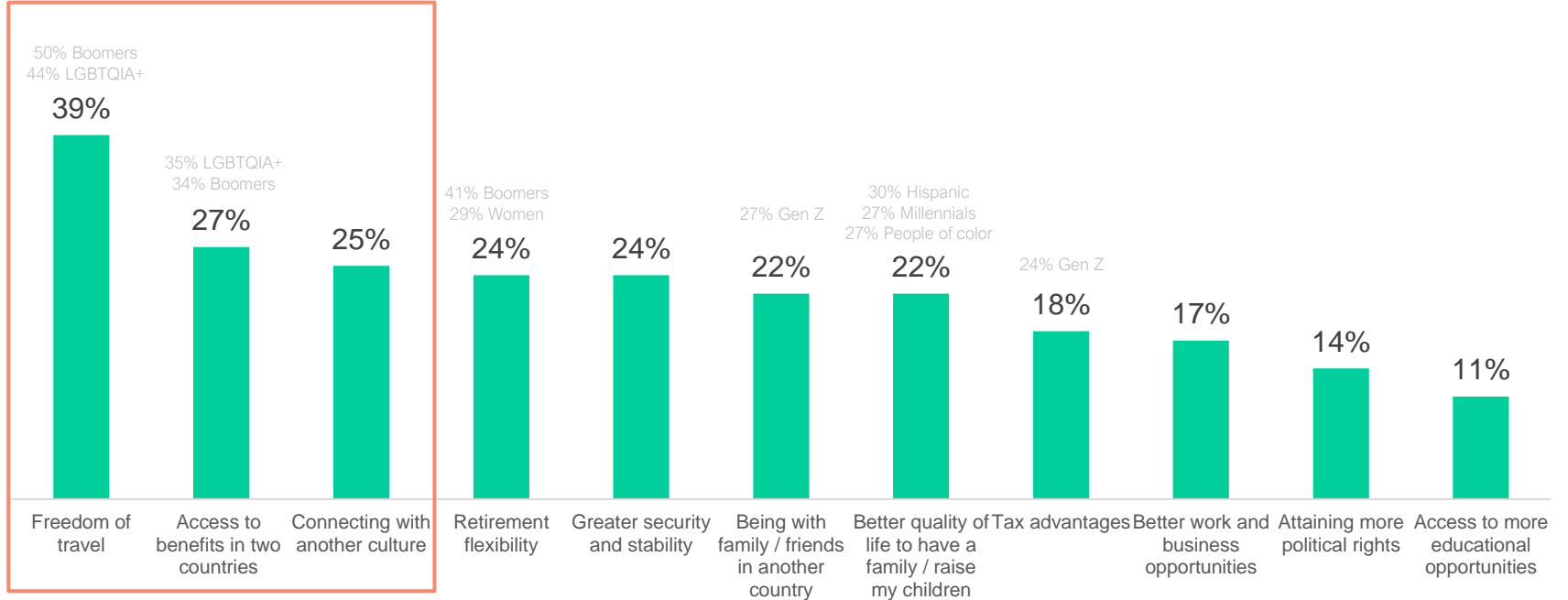
How interested are you in obtaining dual citizenship?





Freedom of travel ranks highest among reasons for wanting dual citizenship, followed by greater benefits and cultural connection

What are your main reasons for wanting to obtain dual citizenship?
(Select up to three)



Q: What are your main reasons for wanting dual citizenship? Please select up to three. (Those interested in dual citizenship n=947)



Americans want new services to meet their expat desires, particularly services that secure housing, healthcare and streamline applications

How interested are you in the following potential services that could help you easily move to another country?
(Very/somewhat interested)



60% of Americans are willing to pay for a service that help them move to another country



Lower cost of living, healthcare, and visa requirements/applications are top priority factors Americans want to know for moving abroad

Which of the following factors are the most important for you to know when moving to another country?
(Select up to three)

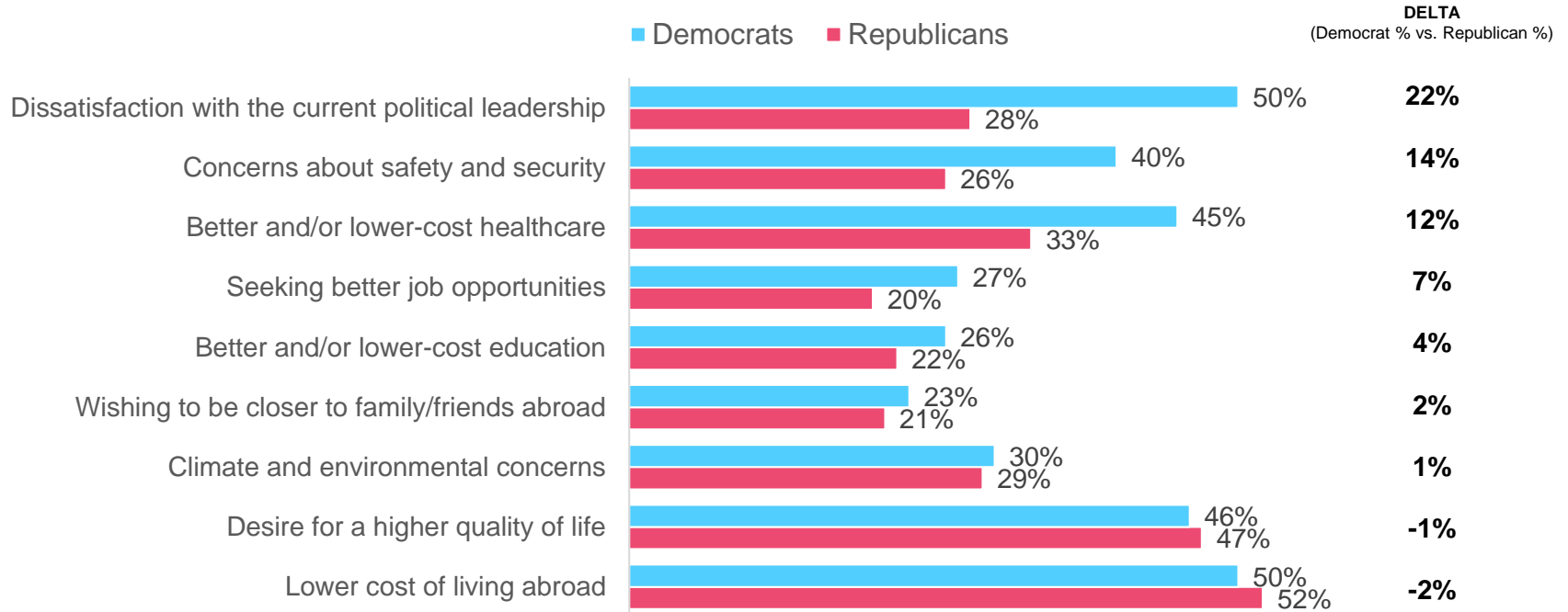
	Cost of living (i.e., housing, food, transportation, etc.)	33%	45% Boomers, 40% LBTQIA+
	Healthcare (i.e., accessibility, cost, etc.)	26%	32% LBTQIA+
	Visa requirements / applications	20%	
	Migration laws / requirements you need to pass in order to qualify to move abroad	19%	24% Boomers
	Public safety / security	18%	23% Gen Z
	Climate / weather	18%	
	Real estate / property costs	17%	23% Boomers
	History / culture	15%	
	Ways of transportation / mobility	14%	
	Domestic and international requirements on taxes	14%	
	Political leadership / governance	13%	21% LBTQIA+
	Education (i.e., quality, cost, etc.)	12%	
	Understanding the native language(s)	11%	

Appendix



Democrats express stronger sentiments for nearly all reasons for moving abroad compared to Republicans

Reasons for considering moving out of the United States

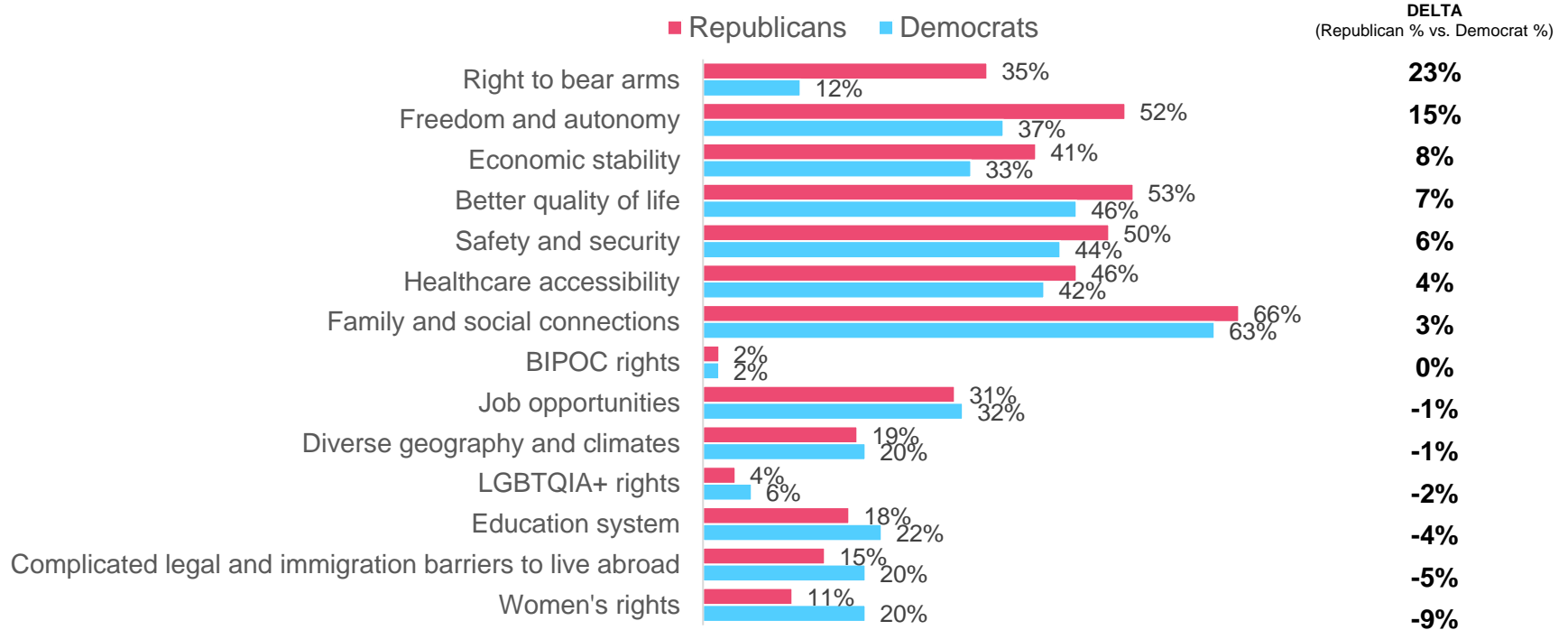


Q: Which of the following reasons best describes why you are considering moving out of the United States? Please select all that apply. (Democrats who considered moving n=375, Republicans who considered moving n=278)



Republicans are especially motivated to stay in the U.S. due to gun ownership and the desire for independence

Reasons for not moving out of the United States

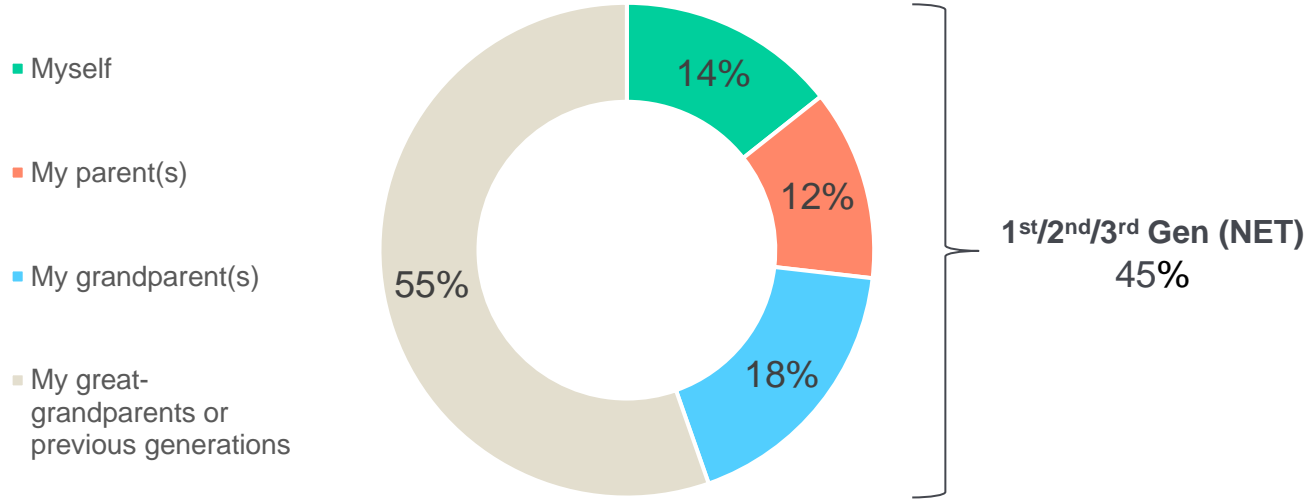


Q: You mentioned you would never move out of the United States. What are your reasons behind this? Please select all that apply. (Democrats who are not considering moving n=316, Republicans who are not considering moving n=522)



Over four in 10 Americans identify as first, second, or third generation citizens in 2024

Who was the first generation of your family to move to the U.S. permanently?



Q: Who was the first generation of your family to move to the U.S. permanently? (Total n=2,106)



Americans with dual citizenship approximately spend a little over \$2,000 to obtain their second passport

Approximately how much did you spend on applying for the following?*

#1	Legal fees	~\$442
#2	Travel expenses	~\$434
#3	Application fees	~\$358
#4	Residency or naturalization costs	~\$284
#5	International passports and identification	~\$159
#6	Medical exams	~\$102
#7	Translation and document certification	~\$70
#8	Background checks	~\$48
#9	Language or civic tests	~\$45
#10	Other expenses related to obtaining dual citizenship	~\$149
	Total	~\$2,091














Q: Approximately how much did you spend on applying for the following? Please enter a whole number. If you did not spend money in a category, please enter 0. (Those with dual citizenship n=28)

*Note: Caution, small base size (n<50) – use for directional purposes only.



While lower living costs is a common reason for wanting to move abroad, it is also the most surprising to learn about alongside healthcare and visa requirements

Which of the following, if any, did you find surprising while researching about moving abroad?
(Select all that apply)

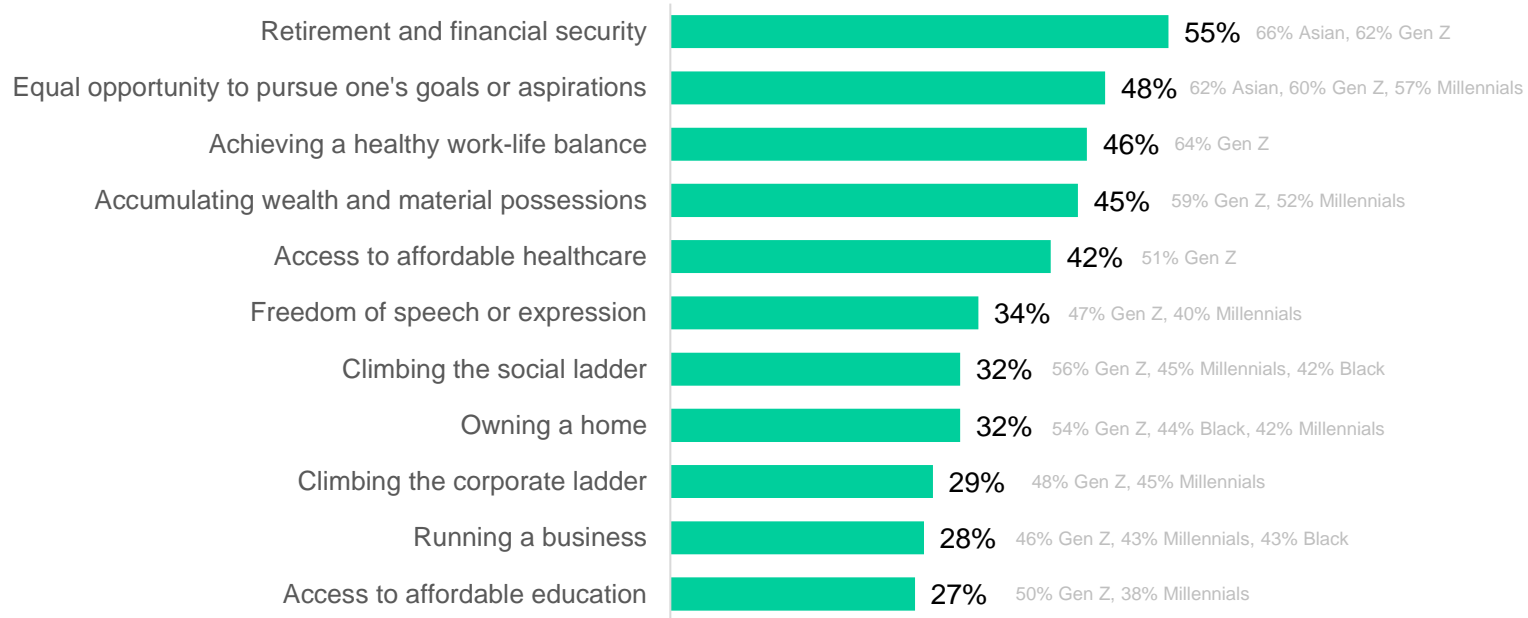
	Cost of living (i.e., housing, food, transportation, etc.)	37%	46% Boomers
	Healthcare (i.e., accessibility, cost, etc.)	34%	
	Visa requirements / applications	30%	39% Boomers
	Migration laws / requirements you need to pass in order to qualify to move abroad	28%	36% Boomers, 35% Gen Z
	Public safety / security	27%	34% Hispanic
	Climate / weather	27%	
	Real estate / property costs	27%	38% Boomers
	History / culture	26%	
	Ways of transportation / mobility	25%	
	Domestic and international requirements on taxes	22%	28% Boomers, 28% \$100K+
	Education (i.e., quality, cost, etc.)	20%	27% Gen Z
	Political leadership / governance	19%	27% Black, 24% Boomers
	Understanding the native language(s)	18%	



Americans are working towards financial security, work-life balance, and equal opportunities to pursue their goals, especially Gen Z

Which statement best describes your experience with the following factors?

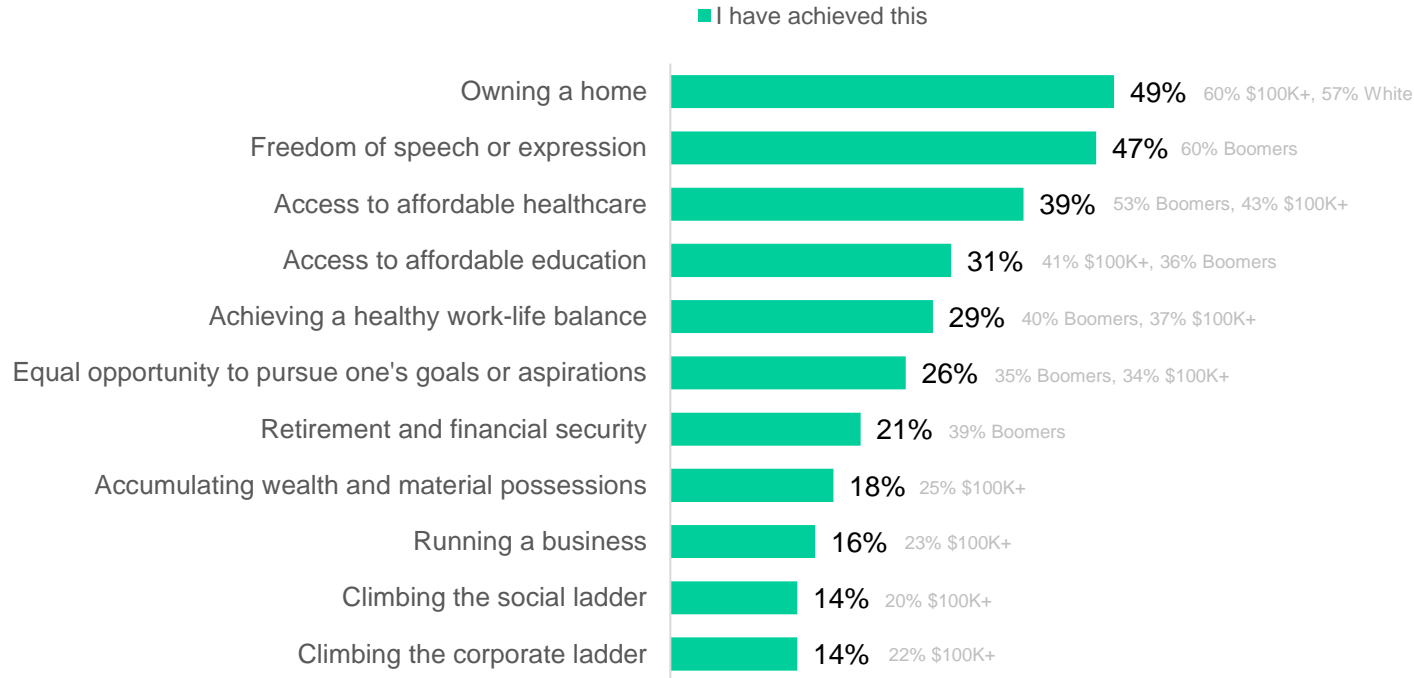
■ I am currently working towards this





Where Americans are doing best is home ownership, freedom of speech, and healthcare- although that's still less than half of all Americans

Which statement best describes your experience with the following factors?

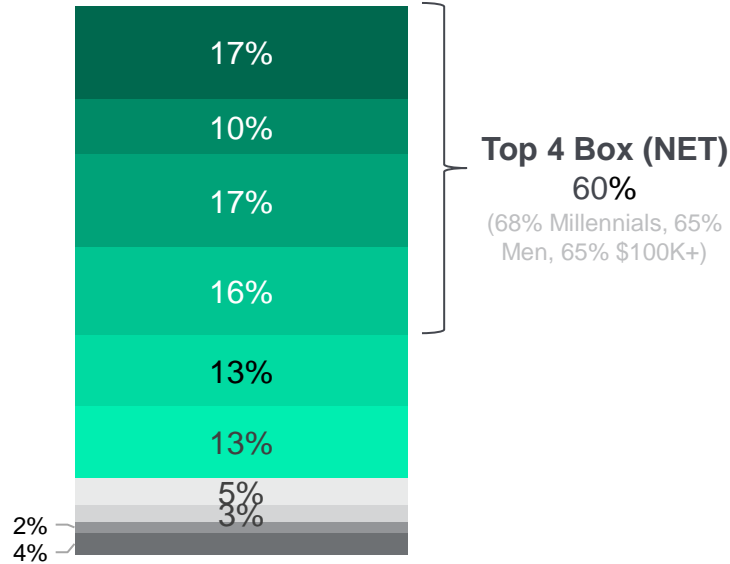


Q: Which statement best describes your experience with the following factors? (Total n=2,106)



Moreover, six in 10 are willing to pay for these services to ease the moving process, highlighting new opportunities for businesses to enter

On a scale of 1-10, how likely or unlikely would you be to pay for a service that could help you easily move to another country?

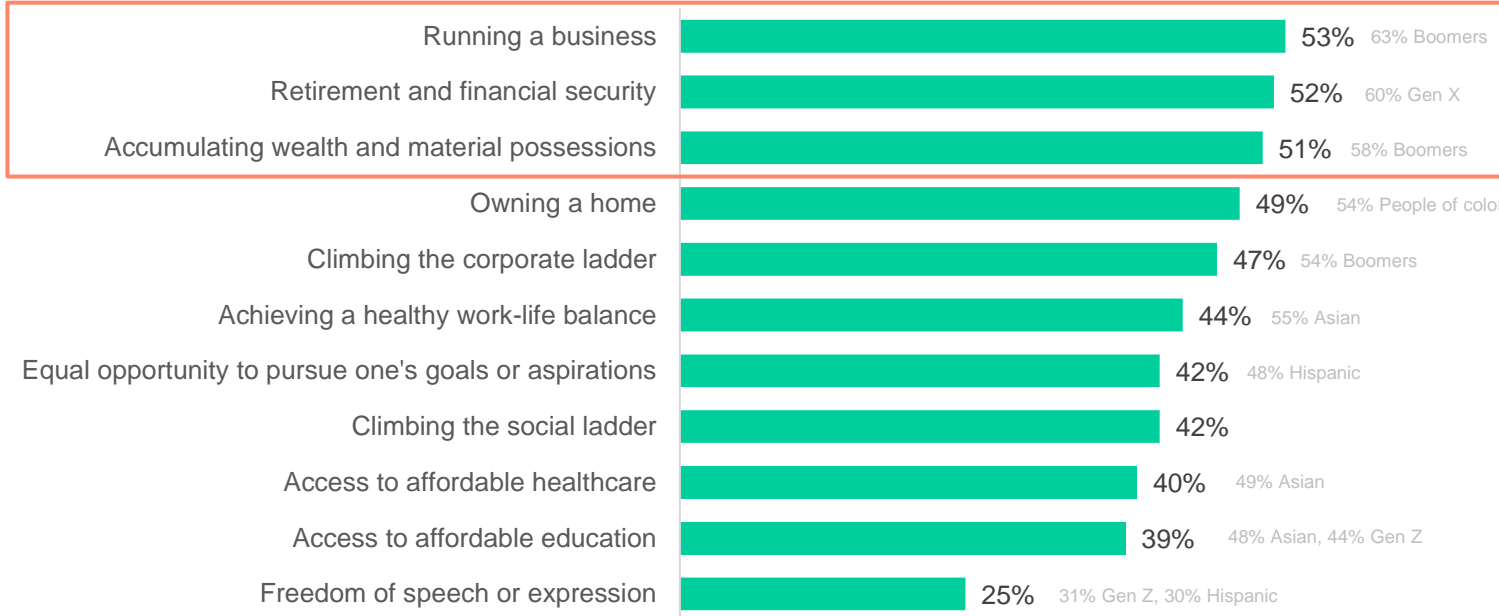


Q: On a scale of 1-10, how likely or unlikely would you be to pay for a service that could help you easily move to another country? (Those considering moving n=926)



Running a business, securing retirement, and building wealth are the hardest to achieve, according to those who have made it or are currently striving for these goals

Difficulty achieving the following factors
(Very/somewhat difficult)



Q: And in your experience, how easy or difficult is it to achieve the following factors? (Top 2 Box, Very/Somewhat Difficult) (Those who are working or achieving n=434-1,274)

To learn more about this research, please reach out to...



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